

Southern Flyer



908th Airlift Wing (Air Force Reserve Command), Maxwell Air Force Base, Montgomery, Ala., Vol. 41, Issue 10, October 2004



Photo by Jeff Melvin

908AW holds 9 – 11 tribute ceremony

908AW Commander, Col. Heath Nuckolls, administers the oath of enlistment to 10 wing reservists in front of a unit C-130 on the Maxwell AFB flightline. The group re-enlistment capped a ceremony commemorating the third anniversary of the attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. A large group of wing members gathered in remembrance of those who died in the terrorist attacks and the war on terror and witnessed their fellow reservists renew their commitment to defend the country. The theme for the ceremony was "We will always remember: We will proudly serve." Since the events of Sept. 11, 2001, more than 500 908th Airlift Wing reservists have been activated to support operations in the war on terror.

Unit, base thankful toll from Ivan the Terrible not greater

By Jeff Melvin
908AW Public Affairs

The most often repeated phrase heard around the wing and across its host base, Maxwell AFB, is "It could have been worse." The loud whooshing sound being heard is not the remnants of Hurricane Ivan but the collective sigh of wing and base members mopping their brows and counting their blessings for weathering the storm in good shape.

Yes, most people are thankful in the wake of a storm that promises to prove to be the most costly natural disaster in Alabama's history and claimed at least 45 lives in the United States, including three here in Montgomery. The storm also knocked out power to more than a million homes and businesses.

908th Airlift Wing Col. Heath J. Nuckolls said the wing suffered minimal damage and relatively low costs as a result of the storm.

"We were fortunate considering the potentially devastating outcome. We are grateful that all of our people made it through the storm safely. Our thoughts and prayers go out to those who were less fortunate," the colonel said.

Col. John Neubauer, commander of the 42nd Air Base Wing which oversees Maxwell-Gunter, said initial estimates project storm damage costs at approximately \$1 million.

"Most of our damage was tree-related. We had about 40 trees go down" at Maxwell and Gunter Annex, Colonel Neubauer said, adding that the biggest damage occurred to the Falcon's Nest club at Gunter Annex which was hit by a falling tree. Falling trees, he said, also damaged several cars.

That amount is still relatively small considering the Maxwell-Gunter complex comprises more than 800 buildings.

Maxwell played a significant role in relief efforts, providing runway for use as a staging area for the distribution of food, ice and water to victims of Hurricane Ivan and providing assistance to the Federal Emergency Management Agency. FEMA helps communities prepare for and recover from natural and man-made disasters.

The approaching storm forced the evacuation of the 908th's C-130 fleet to Tinker AFB, Okla., for safe haven.

In other 908AW storm-related efforts, 25th Aerial Port Squadron personnel helped

FEMA load 112,000 pounds of relief items and the 908th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron were asked and on short notice provided two air evac crews to respond to Ivan's aftermath.

"Within minutes, we had quickly assembled one AE crew within the squadron from personnel on duty, and initiated phone calls to other

qualified AE crewmembers. Within 15-20 minutes, we had almost three crews committed," said 908AES health services administrator Lt. Col. Mike Dankosky.

The AE crews were dispatched to Scott AFB; however, the Air Force received no AE requests in the wake of Hurricane Ivan and the crews returned to home station.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Brannen Parrish, AU/PA

Maxwell base housing resident Dorothea Sudman cleans up her yard after Hurricane Ivan while her daughter Kaitlin, 2, watches from the front porch.

Want your unit in the paper? Tell us what's going on!

By Maj. Jerry Lobb
908AW Public Affairs

Two questions I'm asked most often are: "When are you going to do something on my squadron/flight/section in the Southern Flyer?" The other question is: How do I go about getting something on my unit in the paper?"

I may joke that a donation to my Lamborghini Fund would speed the process...but the real answer is simpler and costs nothing. Contact Jeff Melvin, Staff Sgt. Jay Ponder or myself by whatever means available

and give us the basic information, who, what, when, why, where and how...and we will be happy to take it from there.

If the story takes place in some lovely garden spot far from home...sending a few close up pictures of people IN ACTION (not posed in front of flag or plane) is very likely to get you a gold star and a photo credit in the Southern Flyer.

Too often we find out about events AFTER they've taken place. News is perishable. I can think of a few stories that would have

gone far, IF we knew more about them weeks or months sooner. Five minutes: That is the time I estimate it would take for someone to compose an e-mail or call us with the information we need to do a better job covering the 908th. Aren't telling your story and the work your unit accomplishes worth the effort?

Sometimes things happen quickly over a weekend. If you are called out to perform on short notice some unique, noteworthy task, please reach us by calling the command post at 953-2717

or our office at 953-6804. My cell phone number is on the answering machine message. I'll be happy to come out and shoot a few pictures of people working and gather the basic facts of the story. It is much easier and far better to cover a story that way...than attempting to find people and information later.

We're here to tell your stories...but we have to know about them, first. When you have a good story to tell...tell us so we can pass along the news of your successes and hard work.

Give thanks to God, shift focus from gift to giver of gifts

In his book, "The Progress Paradox: How Life Gets Better While People Feel Worse," Gregg Easterbrook states that we in America live better than 99.4 percent of the rest of the world.

However, he also states that while life expectancy has doubled, real per capita income has doubled, and we have more of the physical comforts than could even be dreamed of just a few decades ago – we lack one thing – happiness. According



Chaplain (Capt.) Jamie Danford
908AW staff chaplain

consider themselves happy continues to decline.

Isn't it amazing that in all this prosperity we are less happy than our grandparents. One reason may be our lack of gratitude. We look at a lot of things as entitlements and never stop to give thanks for the gifts that we have been given. As we continue to focus on "stuff" we begin to order our life around the material things that we possess. We also see that these things can be easily taken away and we

live in worry about when that might happen.

I recommend a daily regimen of a thanksgiving prayer to God for all he has given us. As we give Him thanks for all he has given us our attention will shift from the gift to the giver of the gifts.

May we continue to be in prayer for all our friends and loved ones deployed all over the world. May God be with them.

Time to plan for successful deployments is right now

By Col. Greg Augst
66th Air Base Wing vice commander

HANSCOM AFB, Mass. (AFPN) -- As you read this, some of your fellow Airmen are 6,000 miles from home defending our country on the front lines. Do you think they were prepared to go when they left? Would you be?

Many people have deployed or are preparing to deploy and serve the Air Force around the globe as part of air and space expeditionary forces. No matter where we are stationed, or what we do, deployments are a necessary way of life for Airmen.

Preparation is the key to having a successful deployment. I always found that if I was prepared from the outset, deployments were much easier, and I could help my commanders and subordinates achieve mission success when

everyone was focused 100 percent on the job at hand.

Ensure that you and your family are ready for deployments.

Annual physicals guarantee that you are in the best possible condition before you deploy. Living and working in environments with poor sanitation, temperature variations and remote medical care requires that Airmen be physically prepared to handle adverse situations.

Combat arms training on an M-9 pistol or an M-16 rifle is essential. Just because you aren't in the security forces, doesn't mean you won't be responsible for a weapon while deployed.

Mobility bags are a must for Airmen who deploy because austere locations do not come with a base exchange or a Wal-Mart to replenish supplies.

Think through what your deployment will mean for

your family and how it will affect your finances while you are away. The bills will not stop just because you're deployed, so make sure that you have a plan and the means of covering expenses, checkbooks and credit cards. Get to know the family support center staff -- they are the experts in personal and family readiness.

Things like yard maintenance, pet care and bills need to be resolved before you deploy -- you can't be worrying about what is going on thousands of miles away, when you've got an important job to do. Use the resources provided at home station to assist you; they will make life much easier when you're away.

Legal office staff can help ensure you are fully prepared for personal contingencies when you deploy. Be proactive; use them to draft wills and powers of attorney before you leave.

Finally, life insurance and personal data forms are more important than ever while deployed. Take care of your loved ones and update these forms regularly. Significant life changes occur frequently, and we must update these important repositories of information to ensure correct data is reflected. If you're not around to ensure your wishes are respected, you must communicate these through Servicemen's Group Life Insurance and the record of emergency data.

Now is the time for each of us to assess our readiness. Waiting until you are tapped for a deployment is too late, prepare now.

We are the world's most lethal Air Force, and we are the best because of our first-rate training and readiness. Keep our Air Force strong and do your part to ensure a successful deployment.



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This funded Air Force Reserve Command newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. military services. Contents of the "Southern Flyer" are not necessarily the official views of or endorsed by the U.S. Government, Department of Defense or the Department of the Air Force.

Editorial policy

Editorial content of the "Southern Flyer" is edited, prepared and provided by the 908th Airlift Wing Public Affairs Office. All photos are Air Force photos unless otherwise indicated.

We solicit articles, drawings and photographs and reserve the right to edit materials to conform to "Southern Flyer" editorial policies.

Because of the printing and mail-out schedule the newspaper goes to press on Friday, two weeks prior to the UTA. The submission deadline for articles or information is the Wednesday two weeks prior to the UTA.

For information about this schedule, call Jeff Melvin at (334) 953-7874.

Air Force Reserve recruiters exceed goal for 4th straight year

For the fourth year in a row, Air Force Reserve Command recruiters exceeded the command goal.

They brought in 9,636 new recruits by the end of August. Their goal was 9,600 by Sept. 30. The command's excellent showing was mirrored by the unmatched performance of the 908th's recruiters who put in 219 people this year. Their efforts help the 908th manning to hover around 124 percent, top's command-wide.

Col. Francis Mungavin, AFRC Recruiting Service commander, congratulated members of the service for their accomplishment in an Aug. 31 e-mail.

"I cannot tell you all how proud I am of you all," he wrote. "Our objective is to ensure the command is 100 percent effectively manned. It's a continuous process. Every year we go from hero to zero."

In addition to making goal early, the command had its highest percentage of successful recruiters. Of the 284 recruiters, more than 80 percent made goal.

Last year's goal was 9,500 new recruits, and 79 percent of the recruiters made goal. The percentage of recruiters making goal has risen significantly in the new millennium — 50 percent in 2001 and 60 percent in 2002.

In a letter Sept. 1, Lt. Gen. John Bradley, AFRC commander, congratulated the Recruiting Service people for exceeding their annual recruiting goal for the fourth consecutive year. He called their achievement a "grand slam."

"Most impressive was your push to access more than 2,300 recruits during July and August alone, demonstrating your urgency to man AFRC," wrote the general. "I know I can count on your continued aggressive recruiting efforts. ... You continue to lead the Department of Defense in accessions per production recruiter."

Colonel Mungavin attributed the recruiters' success to several factors and said no one individual made it happen.

"It was a team effort; great recruiters, leadership, our training program, the support staff and infrastructure behind the recruiters," the colonel said.

Wing senior recruiter Senior Master Sgt. Kyle Almquist attributes the unit success to a number of factors including the commitment of the recruiters, the support of the wing's leadership, and the positive example set by unit



Photo by Maj. Jerry Lobb

908AW Command Chief Master Sgt. Amos Moore, left, and 908AW Commander Col. Heath Nuckolls congratulate Master Sgt. Tami Langhorne for being the first 908th recruiter to reach goal this year. Langhorne specializes in recruiting members with prior service. All 908th recruiters made goal and several are on track to earn command awards.

members. The 908th, Almquist said, is "a great unit to sell."

Add to that a swell of patriotism and you have a winning combination. "People are very patriotic. We have a steady stream of people who want to serve our country," he said.

Plus, the Air Reserve has a great program, he added.

Almquist said two things are necessary for a successful program: support of the commander and a good employment chief. He has both.

"Colonel Stewart and Colonel Nuckolls have both been great and I can't say enough about Chief Cantrell. She has done an incredible job for us," he said. (Adapted from an AFRC News Service release)

Deployed engine troops earn kudos

A deployed turboprop mechanic from the 908th Maintenance Squadron and three other reservists earned recognition for repairing an aircraft engine previously deemed unrepairable.

The exceptional work by 908MXS' Tech. Sgt. Jill Hill along with Senior Master Sgt. Ken Schuetz, Tech. Sgt. David Stalker and Staff Sgt. Brian Zdancewicz saved an estimated \$200,000.

After extensive trouble shooting by the four maintainers failed to remedy an internal oil leak on a newly installed engine, another new engine was installed on the aircraft. According to 386th EMXG maintenance production superintendent Senior Master Sgt. Thomas Safer, the deployed reservists "were not satisfied with this; they knew that the unit had no serviceable engines remaining on station and the adverse affect it would have on the mission if more engine problems occurred. They took it upon themselves to further troubleshoot the problem before shipping the engine to depot. Their extensive knowledge and unbridled determination enabled them to find a defect in the accessory gearbox oil

scavenge system. They effectively repaired the defect and returned the engine to a fully serviceable condition; this saved the government between \$150,000.00 and \$200,000.00 in depot repair costs."

The engine was used the next day on an aircraft that required an engine change. "The repaired engine operated flawlessly which resulted in the aircraft returning to fully mission capable status, something that would have been impossible had it not been for the hard work and dedication of these individuals," wrote Sergeant Safer in a letter of appreciation detailing the foursome's handiwork.

386EMXG Commander Col. Grace M. Blevins-Holman indorsed the letter and wrote, "You are maintenance warriors—and the dedication and professionalism you portrayed in going the extra mile on this engine prove it. Your actions provided combat power to the fight and you made a difference."

Along with the letter of appreciation the maintainers were recognized at the wing staff meeting and presented the AEW commander's coin as a token of appreciation.



Courtesy photo

Fasten your seatbelt and hold on

25APS's NCOIC of information management Tech. Sgt. Drusilla Amos tries out the Air Force's Extreme Equilibrium exhibit at the Tuskegee Airmen, Incorporated 33rd annual national convention August 2 -7, in Omaha, Neb. Sergeant Amos represented the Air Force in two capacities: as a reservist and as a civilian employee of the Air Force Institute of Advance Distributed Learning, one of a host of military exhibitors attending the event. Each year the Air Force applauds the major contributions to our national defense made by the Tuskegee Airmen and authorizes attendance at TAI's military forum focusing on military officer, enlisted and civilian issues.



Photo by Capt. Denise Boyd

C-130s from the 908AW (left and center) and the 911AW, Pittsburgh, Pa., sit on the flightline at an undisclosed location in Southwest Asia

C-130s crews, maintainers put boots on the ground in record numbers

Deployed Airmen surpass previous highs in flying hours, hauling people, pallets

By Capt. Denise Boyd
386AEW Public Affairs

SOUTHWEST ASIA -- Airmen assigned to the 386th Air Expeditionary Wing had a record-breaking month supporting Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.

Active duty, guard and reserve C-130s here had more flying hours and carried more pallets and passengers in the month of August than any month previously. They also averaged more passengers per day than any other month.

Since November 2003, the highest number of passengers carried on an average day through the month of July was 1,344. In August, they surpassed that number at 1,698 a day.

The flying hours reached an all-time high of 2,833.3 for the month, almost 75 more hours than the previous months. The number of pallets loaded and carried for

the month was 2,183 -- more than 100 over the previous months.

But the most significant number of all those records broken was for passengers carried.

The previous high number was in July, with 41,673. The month of August saw more than 52,600 passengers.

Hitting locations such as Kuwait International Airport, Baghdad International Airport and Balad Air Base, Iraq, crews work long days, under difficult circumstances.

"There are a myriad of stressors that face our aircrew members, and a fast operational tempo is just one of them. Among the other major issues, I would list the heat, an air traffic control system much less robust than the one we have in the states, as well as hostile small arms fire, anti-aircraft fire and surface to air missiles," said Lt. Col. John

Holly, commander, 746th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron.

"The tactical airlifters of the 386th AEW are the 'Best in the World' and they prove it every day with an unmatched record of operational reliability and sortie effectiveness. Not only do our exceptional men and women get the job done, but they also do it safely in a dangerous and challenging environment," added Colonel Holly.

The ability to perform this high number of missions requires a concerted team effort between everyone assigned here.

According to Maj. Marvin Schaitel, commander, 386th Expeditionary Maintenance Squadron, the active duty, Guard and Reserve maintainers are able to keep the planes flying even while dealing with extremes in operations here.

"Temperatures can be 15 to 20 degrees hotter on the flightline than on the main base," he said. "Picking up a wrench or touching the plane can result in a burn if gloves aren't worn, and working inside the airplane can be best referred to as a sauna."

"But, in spite of all these challenges, the Airmen here continue to excel. Our maintenance operations center synchronizes the daily flying and required maintenance actions; the maintenance supply liaison continuously orders, monitors and tracks needed parts; and the aerospace ground element technicians provide essential ground equipment, tirelessly providing support on a moment's notice."

According to Col. Mike Keltz, commander, 386th



Photo by Chief Master Sgt. Michael Harper

Bunker time -- crews that fly in the AOR have to be ready to evacuate the aircraft quickly if an airfield comes under attack.



Courtesy photo

Deployed 357AS loadmaster Chief Master Sgt. Mike Harper poses with visiting VIP Maj. Gen. Hawkins.



Courtesy photo

Maj. Blaine Bateman's crew flies with the 386AEW vice commander.

AEW, it takes every Airman assigned to this wing to perform these missions.

"From creating flight meals to getting the crew to the planes, to loading the passengers and pallets, it's a total team effort," he said.

"The dedication of the people on the ground here, ensuring the mission goes forward, no matter how difficult the task may appear, is outstanding."

The wing is responsible for tactical airlift into not only Iraq and surrounding areas, but also into the Horn of Africa.

The regular missions performed by the total force C-130 unit here include moving Army personnel during their R&R rotations, transporting Iraqi police cadets, and resupplying forward deployed troops.



Photo by Chief Master Sgt. Michael Harper

Deployed 357AS loadmaster Master Sgt. David Greer directs the unloading of pallets.

908th MSF loses 'rock'

Personnel superintendent retires after 36 years

By Staff Sgt. Jay Ponder
908AW Public Affairs

The 908th is about to lose another unit icon to retirement. After 30 years of service with the 908th, the quiet man who seems to be as comfortable with silence as he is at speaking, Chief Master Sgt. Ezera D. McElwee or Chief "Mac" as he's known to almost everyone around the wing, is about to ride off into the sunset.

Chief Mac's last UTA is this month after 36 years in the military. McElwee entered active duty service in the Air Force in October 1968. He joined the then-908th Tactical Airlift Group in November 1974 and has served under 12 commanders here.

"I've known Mac since I came into the unit in 1975," said former 908th command chief Linda D. Roberts, now budget analyst in the 908th finance department. "We've worked closely over the years. Mac's an outstanding individual and I have a great amount of respect for him. He's really going to be missed throughout the unit."

"He's been a 'rock' in this wing for a long time and he has built a reputation known throughout the Air Force Reserve Command," said 908th Military Personnel Flight commander Maj. Troy Vonada.

McElwee, who is the wing's personnel superintendent, has worked in personnel his entire career excluding five years as chief of training here at the 908th.

He was born in Piedmont, Ala., and grew up with 13 siblings.

He graduated from high school during the height of the Vietnam War and figured he was going into the military one way or another, so he sought out recruiters from the different branches of service and spoke to them about opportunities specific to each branch.

While speaking to the Air Force recruiter, McElwee learned about the personnel career field. He knew that he wanted to join the Air Force from that moment on, he said.

"I don't know if it was just the atmosphere, but I was impressed with the Air Force," said McElwee.

"When I enlisted, I had to

take a copy of my enlistment contract to the selective service. I found out they were mailing out the draft notices the next week."

McElwee went to basic at Lackland AFB and Keesler AFB for technical school.

He then served tours of duty at the now closed bases of Bergstrom AFB in Austin, Texas, Forbes AFB near Topeka, Kansas and spent a year at Hahn Air Base, Germany.

"I guess I've closed a lot of bases," said McElwee.

He was stationed in Germany when he crossed a major threshold in his life.

McElwee met his wife of 31 years, Lenda, while on a trip to Denmark.

He's made a couple of trips back to Germany with the 908th.

The McElwees now have two daughters and three grandchildren.

McElwee said he's had exciting moments in the personnel field.

"My most memorable time with the Air Force Reserve was the challenge of having just completed a grueling ORI and then almost immediately gearing up for Desert Shield," said McElwee.

"Mac" was a key player in the unit during Desert Shield and Desert Storm, said longtime 908th member Lt. Col. Carl Poteat, now the wing executive officer. "He is always at his best under pressure."

The chief, Poteat said, has always been a workaholic. "Mac always did his best, no matter what he did," said Poteat.

Major Vonada speaks highly of McElwee, too. "The chief has definitely served with distinction," said Vonada.

McElwee said one of his proudest moments was being selected as the command's OJT Manager of the Year in 1980. Other honors include Wing Senior NCO of the Year in 1989 and the following spring, reserve recipient of the Governor's Award for outstanding military representative.

The toughest job, he said, has been watching families being separated during deployments.

"It is heart-wrenching to see people go to war," said McElwee, "that is a visible picture of what we're all

about, that's our line of business."

McElwee reminisced about the first time that the 908th deployed as a group to Savannah in the late '70s and "got a taste of the problems of deploying, but it was a lot of fun also," chuckled McElwee.

"There were a lot of exercises there and I was in charge of the firing range," said McElwee. While at Savannah, the chief was issued a 'cracker box ambulance' which is like a box van with a big cross. He happened to drive by where an exercise was in progress and many people were laid out on the ground as simulated casualties.

"They thought we were medics and flagged us. All I had was a single Band-Aid in my pocket," laughed McElwee.

Aside from his very short military medical career, McElwee said that it has been gratifying to witness Airmen grow to be senior NCOs and second lieutenants and former enlisted personnel become colonels.

"If you want something bad enough, you can get it," stated McElwee, and with many years as a personnel supervisor, McElwee said he has been fortunate enough to have been in the position of helping to prep people for promotions and see them start successful careers in the Air Force Reserve through the years. He also indicated that he was fortunate too in that he had supervisors that mentored him throughout his career.

The chief has come up with several ideas over the years that are used Air Force Reserve-wide, according to Major Vonada. For example; years ago, McElwee pioneered Flowing TDY Mini Records, which are computerized groupings of data that flows like data processing. This process is still used today by Persco teams at deployed sites. This process allows Persco teams to access key information that enables them to build Alpha rosters.

"Reservists are the backbone of the military and Mac exemplifies that," said Lieutenant Colonel Poteat.

"Chief Mac took me under his wing and taught me about the personnel busi-



Chief Master Sgt. Ezera "Mac" McElwee

ness. If a young officer doesn't appreciate the NCO and Senior NCO corps, he or she probably won't go very far. Most good officers and higher ranking officers don't forget that."

McElwee credits co-workers through the years for making his career enjoyable. "The people I've worked with here at the 908th have made my career enjoyable, both professionally and personally," said McElwee.

The chief personifies senior enlisted personnel, Poteat said. "Look up Senior NCO in the dictionary and you'll find Chief McElwee." He's the glue that always held everything together, Poteat added.

Chief "Mac," who lives in

Montgomery and belongs to the Christ Community Church, is going to take it easy for a while after retirement. "I'm going to kick back and do something I enjoy, some travel, some volunteer work," said McElwee.

A little-known fact here is that McElwee can play a mean guitar, said Poteat.

McElwee said that he plays in a neighborhood band for fun.

Speaking of fun, there will be a little less of it here when McElwee departs.

"Chief Mac does everything with wisdom and grace, he's a model Senior NCO and chief, and he's going to leave a void in the MPF and in the wing," Major Vonada said.



Photos by Staff Sgt. Jay Ponder

"Chief Mac does everything with wisdom and grace," says 908MPF commander Maj. Troy Vonada.

Reserve component readiness rated highest ever

By Kathleen T. Rhem
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON -- The state of readiness among today's reserve-component forces is higher than it has been in the nation's history, the official responsible for equipping and training those forces said today.

Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs Thomas Hall said he believes the high state of readiness among National Guard and Reserve troops is indicative of the goodness in the American people.

He said the Guard and Reserve are representative of the American people because they are truly citizen-soldiers. Hall added that he believes today's generation of young people has the potential to be the next "greatest generation."

Today's National Guard and Reserve troops are deployed to virtually

every location and every mission requiring active-duty servicemembers.

Hall, a retired two-star Navy admiral, said he believes recruiting and retention will be among the greatest challenges facing the reserve components in the immediate future. With 400,000 guardsmen and reservists mobilized since Sept. 11, 2001, and 157,000 still activated today, he said the war on terrorism has led to the largest mobilization of reserve-component troops since the Korean War.

Historically, Hall explained, there has been a dip in retention rates following major conflicts.

All the reserve components have met their retention goals for fiscal 2004. And all but one, the Army National Guard, met their recruiting goals. Hall said the Army Guard will end the fiscal year 2 percent below its end-strength goal due to a slight

recruiting shortfall, specifically a shortage in recruiting prior-service troops.

The secretary noted recruiting is always challenging, and it's vital "to ensure that we make service in the Guard and Reserve just as attractive as it always has been."

Policymakers need to consider what Hall called the "three-legged stool" -- the individual, the family members and the employer. If all three are not happy, chances are an individual won't re-enlist.

In a message directly to the reserve-component troops, Hall urged them to thank their employers, their families and their communities. He said he's touched by how supportive Americans are of their troops, which is evident in heartfelt displays of support in towns and cities across the country.

Reserve, Guard can seek TRICARE reimbursement

WASHINGTON -- National Guard and reserve members who paid their medical and dental bills and saved their receipts may now seek reimbursement from TRICARE, officials of the military health care system announced July 23.

Officials said the system will begin processing medical and dental claims for Guard and Reserve members who meet certain eligibility requirements.

Only guardsmen and reservists issued "delayed-effective-date active-duty orders" for more than 30 days in support of a contingency operation, and their families, may be eligible to have medical claims reimbursed.

And according to TRICARE, only those medical expenses incurred during the military member's "early eligibility" period -- up to 60 days prior to reporting to active duty -- from Nov. 6, 2003, to the present are eligible for reimbursement.

This temporary entitlement is part of the Defense Department's 2004 Temporary Reserve Health Benefit Program, which sought to enhance benefits for Guard and reserve members called to active duty.

Normally, under TRICARE guide-

lines, Reserve and Guard members cannot be enrolled into TRICARE until they reach their final duty location. The temporary entitlement gives them access upon receipt of activation orders, up to 60 days in advance.

Last year, President Bush signed legislation authorizing three new temporary provisions for guardsmen and reservists and their families that provided enhanced access for a limited time during contingency activation. The provisions were made retroactive to Nov. 6, 2003.

A second provision temporarily extended eligibility for TRICARE benefits to 180 days for those guardsmen and reservists who separated from active-duty status during the period Nov. 6, 2003, through Dec. 31, 2004.

The third provision extends TRICARE medical benefits to reserve-component sponsors and family members who are either unemployed or employed but not eligible for employer-provided health coverage.

All temporary provisions will end Dec. 31, 2004.

However, the measure did include three provisions for permanent health benefits: making benefit counselors

available for Guard and Reserve members in each TRICARE region, authorizing medical and dental screening and care for members alerted for mobilization, and providing TRICARE eligibility for reserve officers pending orders to active duty following commissioning.

Guardsmen, reservists and their family members must be registered in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System and be TRICARE eligible to qualify for the temporary benefit.

To apply for reimbursement, eligible members must submit a TRICARE claim form, a copy of their itemized bill, an explanation of benefits and proof of payment (if the bill was already paid) to their regional TRICARE claims processor.

Claims processing instructions and a downloadable TRICARE claims form, DD Form 2642, are available at local TRICARE service centers or from TRICARE regional contractors, or may be downloaded from <http://www.myTRICARE.com> or <http://www.humana-military.com>. (AFRC News Service from American Forces Press Service)



Web page provides voting information

By Master Sgt. Ron Tull
AFPC Public Affairs

RANDOLPH AFB, Texas (AFPN) -- With less than 80 days to the presidential election, Air Force officials have added another tool to their voting effort to ensure all Airmen can participate.

"Airmen Votes" is the name of a Web page designed to give Airmen, their family members and Air Force civilians all the information they need to register to vote, file an absentee ballot request and mail in an absentee ballot.

"Your vote counts. Since 1960 two different presidential elections have been decided by less than 1 percent of the popular vote," Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John P. Jumper said. "The absentee voting system has traditionally been fraught with challenges, but we are working hard to make it easier for you to vote no matter where you're located."

The Web page is available at www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/airmenvotes/. It can also be reached through Air Force Link and the Air Force Portal.

The page boils down the essential elements of the federal voting Web site to make registering to vote as simple as possible.

"We wanted to create the ability for our Airmen to be within three mouse clicks of registering to vote in any state from anywhere in the world," said Maj. Gen. Anthony F. Przybyslawski, Air Force Personnel Center commander here.

"It is our right and privilege as Americans," he said. "Lives were lost defending this right. There is no excuse not to vote."

Department of Defense officials have teamed up with U.S. Postal Service officials to treat balloting materials as priority mail going to and from the voter. A significant change for voters overseas is ballots will receive postal cancellation at the APO or FPO to give a more accurate measure of the date and time a ballot is received into the postal system.

For more information, Airmen can contact unit voting assistance officer Tech. Sgt. Rod Bush at 953-5478 or installation voting assistance officer Maj. Mark Gisi at 953-7959.

Finance agency opens new reserve pay center

WASHINGTON (AFPN) -- The Defense Department's new Reserve Pay Center of Excellence has officially opened for business.

The operation, part of Defense Finance and Accounting Service, will further improve service "to the men and women who defend America," according to a DFAS news release. It will offer "better productivity" to a "key military customer group."

The move centralizes payroll activities for all Army and Air Force National Guard and Reserve elements, as well as the Naval Reserve, in Cleveland. DFAS officials said

they expect "significant" productivity gains from running these operations from an established, centralized pay-support site.

"DFAS is constantly striving to improve the way it serves its customers," said Pat Shine, director of the agency's military and civilian pay services business line. "The Reserve Pay Center of Excellence will make us even more responsive to the needs of a critical component of America's defense -- the Reserve and Guard."

According to the release, centralized pay and customer-service operations began for the Air Force Reserve

in May. The Air National Guard, Army Reserve and Army National Guard accounts will follow. The Cleveland center already had been servicing the Naval Reserve before the consolidation.

The new center's stand-up did not cause any job losses. Workers at the Denver center who handled Guard and Reserve accounts "have been re-assigned to other high-priority military pay tasks," noted the release. And "no loss of jobs will occur" when Army Guard and Reserve functions move from Indianapolis. (Courtesy of American Forces Press Service)

October Unit Training Assembly Schedule

Start	End	Event	Location/OPR
Friday, Oct. 1, 2004			
1630	1900	Commanders' Staff Meeting	Bldg. 1056/CC Conference Room
Saturday, Oct. 2, 2004			
0730	0800	Sign In	Orderly Room
0730	0800	Newcomers' Flight Reception	Bldg. 1056/Rm 101/DPMS
0800	0850	Newcomers' Intro/Orientation	Bldg. 1056/Rm 101/DPMS
0800	1100	Lab Work/DNA/HIV/Blood Testing	Bldg. 760/Lab
0800	TBD	Self Aid and Buddy Care Instructor Training	Bldg. 1055/Classroom 3
0820	1500	Physicals (Bring Shot Record)	Bldg. 760/First Floor/Pharmacy Lobby
0830	0900	Pregnancy Profiles	Bldg. 711/Records Room
		Fitness for Duty (Bring DD Form 689)	
0830	1030	Anthrax Briefings (30 min.)	Bldg. 760/First Floor
0830	1230	NBC Defense Training (Refresher)	Bldg. 1154/Rm 119
0830	TBD	Units at Range M-9 (Classroom/Firing)	Firing Range/SFS/Combat Arms
0900	1000	Wing Mobility Out-Processing	Bldg. 848/West Side
0900	1130	Shots (Yellow Fever, 1030-1130)	Bldg. 760/First Floor
0900	1000	Unit Safety Reps Mtg	Bldg. 1056/CC Conf Rm
0900	1100	Mask Fit Testing (as scheduled)	Bldg. 760/Second Floor
0930	1000	TDY/PCS Out-Processing	Bldg. 1056/Rm 111, DPMSA
1000	1100	Unit Deployment Managers' Mtg	Bldg. 1056/CC Conf Rm
1030	1130	First Sergeants' Meeting	Golf Course Snack Bar
1100	1200	Operational Risk Management	Bldg. 1056/CC Conf Rm
1130	1230	Top Three Association	Bldg. 1056/Cmd. Chief's Office
1230	1530	CDC Testing (SNCOA Course 5&12 CD Rom Only)	Bldg. 903/DPMT
1300	1500	IGX Participants' Briefing	SOC, Bldg. 1403, Polifka Auditorium
1300	1400	Human Resources Development Council	Bldg. 1056/CC Conf Rm
1300	1500	Newcomers' MPF In-Processing	Bldg. 1056/Rm 109/
1330	1730	NBC Defense Training (Refresher)	Bldg. 1154/Rm 119
1330	1400	Fitness for Duty (Bring DD Form 689)	Bldg. 711/Records Room
1400	1500	Supervisors' Safety Training Mtg	Bldg. 1056/CC Conf Rm
1500	1600	Gas Mask/A1 Bag Issue (Newcomers)	Bldg. 848/West Side
1530	1700	Wing Commander's Call	SOC, Bldg. 1403, Polifka Auditorium
1700	TBD	Sign Out	SOC
1700	TBD	Officer's Call	Officer's Club Pit

Sunday, Oct. 3, 2004			
0630	0700	Sign in	Orderly Room
0830	0930	Fitness Evaluations (Bring Sqdn Ltr)	Bldg. 711/Records Room
0830	1230	NBC Defense Training (Initial)	Bldg. 1154/Rm 119
0830	TBD	Units at Range M-16 (Classroom)	Firing Range/SFS/Combat Arms
0830	1130	Hazardous Cargo Training	TBD
0830	1130	Pallet Build-up/Joint Inspection	25APS (Various locations)
0830	0900	Fitness for Duty (Bring DD Form 689)	Bldg. 711/Records Room
0900	1100	Flightline Driver Training	Bldg. 846/Classroom No. 1
0900	0930	Worship Service (Recommended)	Bldg. 846/Classroom No. 2/25APS
0930	TBD	Contamination Control Team/Shelter Mgt Tm	Bldg. 1055/Classroom No. 1
1000	1030	Worship Service (Recommended)	Bldg. 848/Classroom/Com Flt
1000	1100	Wing Career Advisors' Meeting	Bldg. 1052
1100	1130	Worship Service (Recommended)	Bldg. 1056/Rm 101/DPM
1130	1230	Chief's Group Meeting	Bldg. 1461
1130	1230	SORTS/Commander Meeting	Bldg. 1055/Cmd Post
1230	1430	Self Aid and Buddy Care	Bldg. 1055/Classroom
1230	TBD	Units at Range M-16 (Firing)	Firing Range/SFS/Combat Arms
1230	1530	CDC Testing	Bldg. 903/DPMT Classroom
1330	1400	Fitness for Duty (Bring DD Form 689)	Bldg. 711/Records Room
1330	1430	UTA Bulletin Meeting	Bldg. 903/DPMT
1600	TBD	Sign-out	Orderly Room

Support functions' schedule			
<u>Activity</u>	<u>Dates & hours of operation</u>		<u>Location/Ext.</u>
Newcomers' Training Flight		Sun, 0630-1600	Bldg. 1056/Rm 101
MPF Customer Service	Sat, 0800-1200	Sun, 0900-1100	Bldg. 1056/3-5522
		Sun, 1200-1600	Bldg. 1056/3-5522
ID Cards	M-F, 0630-1600	Sun, 0700-1600	Bldg. 1056/3-5522
	Sat, 0800-1200		
	1500-1700		
Reserve Pay	M-F, 0700-1100;	Sat, 0800-1600	Bldg. 1056/3-6722
	1200-1600		
Fitness For Duty (Bring DD Form 689)	Sat, 0830-0900	Sun, 0730-0800	Bldg. 711/3-5714
	1330-1400		
Medical Records	Sat, 0800-1500	Sun, 0800-1300	Bldg. 711/3-5714
Individual Equipment	Sat, 0800-1530		Bldg. 1154/3-6020
Clothing Sales	Sat, 0900-1500		Bldg. 851/3-7505
Restricted Area Badges	M-F, 0630-1600	Sun, 1200-1500	Bldg. 502/3-4283
Vehicle Registration	M-F, 0730-1600	Sun, 1200-1500	Bldg. 502/3-4283
	Sat, 1300-1500		Bldg. 1056/Rm 122C
Geneva Convention Cards	M-F, 0730-1600	Sun, 1200-1500	Bldg. 502/3-4283
Dining Hall	Sat, 0600-0930	Sun, 0600-0930	Bldg. 668/3-5127
	1100-1300	1100-1300	
	1600-1830	1600-1830	
Lodging office/reservations (lodging problems, contact 908th rep via lodging front desk)			Bldg. 1573/3-2401
Photo lab	M-F, 0730-1630	Sun, 1300-1500	Bldg. 926/3-7981

October UTA Lodging

To access the Lodging Reservation System, please follow these instructions:

- * Make reservations, cancellations or changes at least 24 hours prior to arrival.
- * Call Maxwell at 1-800-673-9356
- * Input your unit's authorization code
- * Dial the system at 3-8557 or 3-8558
- * The system will ask for your SSAN, which you will input with the telephone keypad
- * The system will ask for your personal ID number, followed by the "#" sign. (PIN is available through your First Sergeant or Services 3-7332)
- * The system will ask if you would like to make, change, or cancel a reservation.
- * To make a reservation, input arrival date and then departure date.
- * You will be asked if the reservation is ADT, IDT, or both (ADT: Annual Tour, Mandays, Special Tour) (IDT: UTA, AFTP, RMP, Make-up UTA)
- * If this is a scheduled UTA weekend, the system will tell you where you will be staying
- * If you cancel or change a reservation, you will be prompted for a phone number.
- * **The confirmation number you receive is for 908th Services use only.**

Note: You can also call the system direct DSN or Commercial. The numbers are: DSN 493-8557/8558 or COMM: (334) 953-8557/8558.

If you have a question please contact Master Sgt. Byron Godwin at:

Commercial: (334) 953-7332

DSN: 493-7332

E-mail: byron.godwin@maxwell.af.mil

Emergency cell: (334) 657-1304

Notice! Checkout time at Maxwell Lodging for the October UTA is 0800 Sunday. If you do not have time to go to the front desk, and do not have a phone charge, there will be a key drop box located in Bldg. 157 (Main Lodging) for your convenience. Please do not use this box if you have any charges on your bill. In accordance with AFI 34-246 **smoking is not permitted in lodging rooms.** You may be charged a minimum of \$50 for cleaning for violating this AFI.

Airlift will be lodged at the Hampton Inn, Prattville.

Aurora, Ill./Huntsville, Ala. Airlift Schedule

UTA pick-up schedule Friday:

Depart Maxwell at 1530 local

Arrive Aurora at 1800 local

Depart Aurora at 1830 local

Arrive Huntsville at 2030 local

Depart Huntsville at 2100 local

Maxwell at 2145 local

UTA return schedule Sunday:

Bus departs Bldg. 1056 at 1530

Depart Maxwell at 1600 local

Arrive Huntsville at 1645 local

Depart Huntsville at 1700 local

Arrive Aurora at 1900 local

Depart Aurora at 1915 local

Arrive Maxwell at 2115 local

FY 05 Unit Training Assembly Dates

Take Note

Congratulations to the following people:

Promotions

....to Senior Master Sgt.

Andres Soler, AES

....to Master Sgt.

Kimberly Devore, ASTS

Donnie Freeman, OSF

Ernest Geisen, MXS

Douglas Lowe, ASTS

Lynette Myles, 25APS

Teresa Snell, ASTS

Charlene Soares, ASTS



Courtesy photo

Sharp troop

Tech. Sgt. Tonya Peterson, chaplain services support technician was selected by the 908AW Chief's Group for the August Sharp Troop award. Sergeant Peterson was selected based on job performance, military bearing and personal appearance.

....to Tech. Sgt.

Michael Moody,

LRS

Jason Towery, AES

John Vaughn, CES

Latoshia Whitaker,

OSF

....to Staff Sgt.

Tarrisa Brown,

ASTS

Anthony Griggs Jr.

25APS

William Gunnun,

AMXS

Christopher Sims,

AW

Joseph Smith,

ASTS

Rinickey Snell, SFS

Eunice Stockdale,

LRS

Billy Thornton,

MXS

Crystal Wilson,

OSF

....to Senior Airman

Bradley Harrell, AMXS

Talton Hobbs, MXS

Damion Howell, MSS

Glenties Jacobs, MXS

Markis Myers, CES

Delricus Pittman, CES

Joellie Regan, 25APS

Kenyse C. Savage, LG

Camille Scott, CF

Tiesha Simmons, 357AS

Rodney Smith, ASTS

Scott Tucker, MXS

David Wilson, ASTS

Eric Wright, 25APS

....to Airman 1st Class

Jessica Berry, ASTS

Brandon Ballenger, MXS

Byron Dale, SFS

Stephen Degracia, ASTS

Tyreca Jones, 25APS

Christopher Scholtz, MXS

Cedrea Young, SVF

....to Airman

Christopher Barbour, SVF

James Bowler, 25APS

Joshua Burton, 357AS

Keith Hayden Jr., LRS

Andrea Lamberti, MXS

Yolanda Roland, LRS

James Rylee, CES

Randy Stephens, CES

Tenisha Watford, SVF

Junior Officers of the Quarter

1st Qtr, Capt. David Lionberger,

LRS

2nd Qtr, Capt. Jamie Danford,

HC



Photo by Jeff Melvin

Riding in Style

Tech. Sgt. Ken Carter (rear), Master Sgt. Tyrone Duncan (ctr) and Senior Airman Heather Kitchens settle into the comfortable confines of a stretch limousine for a ride to lunch at the Olive Garden Sept. 11. The lucky trio were the second quarter 908AW NCO, SNCO and Airman of the Quarter respectively and were treated to lunch and the luxury ride in recognition. "Touch of Class" Limousine and Transport, Inc. provided the ride for free.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jay Ponder

Welcome to the club

The 908th's newest chief, 908th MXS's maintenance superintendent Chief Master Sgt. Don Smith, accepts congratulations for his ascension to the top enlisted rank from well-wishers at his induction ceremony

hosted by the wing's Chiefs Group Sept. 12. Chief Smith has been with the 908th since 1975 and has progressed from E4 to E9 during his tenure here.

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Montgomery, AL. 36112-6501

To the Family of: